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RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 4345
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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 8796
RULSDMK/NSA US WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JCS WASHDC
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHFJSCC/COMMARFORPAC
RHMFISS/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI
RUHBANB/COMMARCORBASESJAPAN CAMP BUTLER JA
RHHMBRA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BANGKOK 000680

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [CH](#) [TH](#) [ASEAN](#) [SN](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: CHINA ON THAILAND, SINGAPORE, JAPAN AND EAS

REF: A. BEIJING592: SONTHI DISCUSSES ARMS PURCHASES

[1](#)B. 06BANGKOK5799: IMPLEMENTING SANCTIONS

[1](#)C. BANGKOK653: SINGAPORE SPAT

Classified By: Political Counselor Susan M. Sutton, Reasons 1.4 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. Chinese diplomats confirmed that Thai interim PM Surayud Chulanont will visit China in April, and shared that the Thai Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn has delayed his planned trip in a snit. The Chinese stated that CNS Chairman General Sonthi Boonyaratglin's recent trip to Beijing resulted in informal agreements for more military expert exchanges between the two countries, and might portend increases in the Thai purchase of Chinese military equipment. Chinese diplomats predicted that although the Thai-Singaporean relationship is currently tense, it would not worsen. They also expressed optimism that Japan's new PM Shinzo Abe's term would translate into an upturn in Sino-Japanese relations. Chinese diplomats assessed that the recent East Asia Summit (EAS) in Cebu, Philippines was a success, and hoped that EAS would become a "middle ground" for the Chinese and Americans to meet and discuss issues pertaining to East Asia. End summary.

SURAYUD TO VISIT CHINA

[1](#)2. (C) As part of Embassy Bangkok's regular tea meetings with the PRC Embassy, Chinese Political Counselor, Jiang Yili, confirmed that no Chinese high-level visits to Thailand are currently being planned. However, Thailand's interim prime minister, Surayud Chulanont, will be visiting the PRC in April. Jiang then joked that although a famous Thai astrologer predicted that 2007 would not be an auspicious year for Thailand, she believed that the Surayud government "have control of the (domestic) situation" and assessed that the state of domestic politics "depended upon how the (Thai) economy is going."

THE CROWN PRINCE POSTPONES CHINA TRIP IN A SNIT

13. (C) Jiang shared that a planned visit by the Thai Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn to take place early this year has been postponed. She explained that the crown prince was "angry" that he was refused his request for "special VIP treatment" while visiting China. This would have been his first trip to the PRC; his sister, Crown Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, visited China a number of times and speaks fluent Mandarin Chinese.

ON THINGS MILITARY...

14. (C) Jiang stated that although no formal agreements were signed during the January 21-24 visit to Beijing of Thailand's Council of National Security (CNS) Chairman Sonthi Boonyaratglin (reftel A), China expected that there would be an increased exchange of military experts between the two countries. Also, Jiang noted that Sonthi's trip would likely translate into an increase in the Thai purchase of Chinese military equipment.

WHAT? THE US STILL SELLS WEAPONS TO THAILAND?

15. (C) Inquiring details to the US Section 508 sanctions that was placed on Thailand after the military coup (reftel B), the Chinese were surprised to learn that Section 508 did not affect military sales. Poloff explained that Section 508 only affected various forms of US military grants and

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assistance to the Thai military and that we were still able to conduct foreign military sales.

FEUDING NEIGHBORS

16. (C) Noting the current tension in Thai-Singaporean relations, Jiang assessed that since both Thailand and Singapore are members of ASEAN, "things would not get any worse." Jiang stated that Thailand "just wanted to teach Singapore a lesson" (reftel C), and she did not expect Thailand to take any steps that would worsen the two countries' relationship.

AND CHINA'S OWN FEUD...

17. (C) Jiang expressed optimism in the new Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. She noted that Sino-Japanese relations has dramatically improved since Abe's term and expected the relationship to continue to improve under his government. Jiang stated that there is "still time for Abe to show his ability," and confirmed that Chinese President Hu Jintao will visit Japan in April.

NEW PLATFORM FOR EAST ASIAN MULTILATERALISM?

18. (C) Jiang said that the recent East Asia Summit (EAS)/ASEAN 3 meeting in Cebu, Philippines was a great success. She stated that although EAS is a "new platform" for leaders of East Asian countries to discuss issues and resolve differences, it is still uncertain what kind of role EAS would play in the future. Jiang suggested that since ASEAN 3 is currently the principle mechanism for China to engage with its East Asian neighbors -- like APEC is for the United States -- perhaps EAS could be a "middle ground" for China and the US to meet together along with the other East Asian players to discuss multilateral issues.

